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ABSTRACT

Methods and materials for training parents to become involved in the development of an individualized educational program (IEP) for their handicapped children are presented. An introductory section details the goals and objectives of the program, describes parent involvement, and discusses the use of the training guide. Six training units explore the following topics (sample activities in parentheses): (1) getting acquainted (introductions), (2) IEP and the law (review of federal laws and New Jersey state regulations), (3) understanding IEP terms (glossary puzzle), (4) the IEP in the local special education process (review of the process), (5) anatomy of an IEP (IEP self evaluation), and (6) at the IEP meeting (ways to prepare and suggestions for participation). Each section has an introduction and a form for evaluating the unit. A list of annotated references on the laws regarding IEPs are included. (PHR)

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THE IEP PARENT INVOLVEMENT TRAINING GUIDE

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a cooperative effort of the

Northeast Regional Resource Center

and the

New Jersey Department of Education
Branch of Special Education
and Pupil Personnel Services

October 1979

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DEDICATION

This document is dedicated, as it should be, to the indefatigable, concerned, committed parents who were an inspiration for the development and compilation of the IEP Parent Involvement Training Guide.

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Professional educators for many years have encouraged parents to take an active role in the education of their children and now as a result of federal legislation for the handicapped (Public Law 94-142) this position has been supported and enhanced. Parents are seen as partners in the procedures established regarding identification, classification, programs and placement for the handicapped child. New Jersey Special Education Rules and Regulations (N.J.A.C. 6:28) support this direction and set some specific guidelines toward the accomplishment of the mandate for parental involvement. While these laws and procedures provide a formal and legal basis for parental involvement in the special education process, they are only a blueprint. It is the goodwill and professional skill of the New Jersey professional educational community that gives real meaning to this process.

In reviewing this training guide, it is impossible not to associate this kind of product, this kind of advocacy, with the late Dr. Daniel Ringelheim, former Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services. His belief in the necessity to inform and work with parents was a strong and impressive statement of faith in their capability as well as their primary role in the special education process. With the utilization of this training guide, the Department of Education, Branch of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services, Division of School Programs is continuing to carry out this philosophy to further ensure that parents are actively involved in all areas of planning for the special needs of handicapped children.

Paul B. Winkler

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Deputy Assistant Commissioner
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PREFACE

The State of New Jersey has a long history of progressive legislation addressing the needs of handicapped children. New Jersey law was one of the models for the landmark federal legislative action affecting the education of handicapped children, Public Law 94-142.

As a result, New Jersey was already essentially in compliance with Public Law 94-142 at the time of its enactment. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) required for each handicapped child under the provisions of Public Law 94-142 was already a feature of education for the handicapped in New Jersey schools.

The missing piece in New Jersey's laws and regulations was parental involvement in the IEP process, a specific requirement of the federal law.

The New Jersey Department of Education is committed to the idea of involving parents in the IEP process and has sought means of encouraging full, positive participation of parents in IEP meetings. The present document is a tangible result of the Department's commitment.

The Department of Education, Branch of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services, in cooperation with the Northeast Regional Resource Center, has produced this training guide for the use of local school district personnel. The materials are intended to assist districts in training parents of handicapped children as participants in the development of individualized education programs for their handicapped children. The materials were originally presented in a series of parent training sessions conducted at the Educational Improvement Centers in New Jersey during the summer of 1978.

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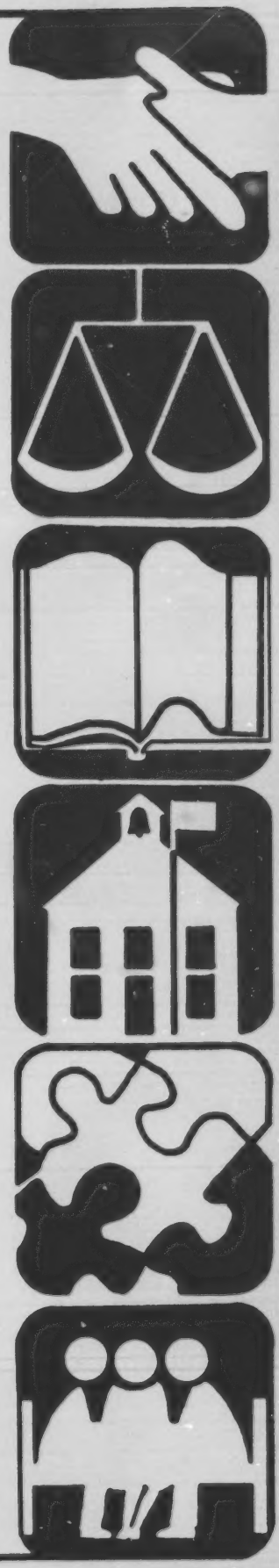
Introduction



GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF

THE IEP PARENT INVOLVEMENT TRAINING GUIDE

GOAL

The suggested methods and materials included in the IEP Parent Involvement Training Guide are designed to assist the personnel of local education agencies (LEA) in preparing the parents of handicapped children for effective participation in the development of individualized education programs for their children.

OBJECTIVES

The suggested methods and materials included in the IEP Parent Involvement Training Guide have the following objectives:

- to assist parents in gaining an understanding of state and federal legislation which affects the education of handicapped children;
- to help parents become familiar with the language of educational planning;
- to help parents attain a basic understanding of the IEP process;
- to help parents attain a basic understanding of the components of the IEP;
- to assist parents in developing skills and strategies for participation in IEP meetings.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT — WHAT ABOUT IT?

Public Law 94-142 guarantees that American educators will address the individual needs of handicapped childen and that these children will receive a full share in the benefits of the educational system.

An important feature of Public Law 94-142 is the individualized education program (IEP), a time-limited, goal-oriented, comprehensive educational plan required for each handicapped child under the provisions of this federal law. Public Law 94-142 specifically requires the involvement of parents in the development of the IEP. Parents must be notified of and invited to the IEP meeting.

Parental involvement of this nature is an entirely new concept in educational planning and it raises a difficult question — how can parents become effective participants in the planning process?

Educators involved in the IEP process speak to each other in a highly developed language and operate with a sophisticated understanding of relevant laws and regulations. Many parents hear the language as jargon and know relatively little about laws and regulations. The IEP meeting may be a frustrating experience for such a parent. How can this frustration be reduced?

In spite of the efforts of school personnel, many parents have questions and concerns about the classification process and are not familiar with the roles of the various professionals involved. Parents are often not knowledgeable concerning the various types of testing performed by members of the child study team. The parent may not know very much about the structure and content of an IEP or the process of putting an IEP into effect. How can such general information be shared with parents?

The final and most important question is this: What specific role should the parent take in the IEP process and how can the parent be prepared for this role? The other participants at the IEP meeting all have a clearly defined function. What is the parent's function at the meeting? What information does the parent bring to the planning process?

Although the IEP Parent Involvement Training Guide does not answer all these questions, it does provide parents with an opportunity to discuss and learn about the IEP process.

Many educators can see why active parental participation in the IEP process is desirable. Parents bring a wealth of information and a set of very realistic long-range concerns to the IEP meeting. They know their child intimately. They know how their child is likely to react to various approaches and how the child feels about particular teachers and particular subjects. Parents are naturally concerned about the future. They want to be assured that their child has an educational program that is preparing him/her for adult life.

Above all, the parent is responsible for the child's on-going care. The parent has a right to know about and be involved in the IEP process, a process that has many implications for the child in years to come.

Parent involvement has a great positive potential. Educators presently face the challenge of tapping this potential.

Parents who have a grasp of the relevant laws and regulations, who have a basic understanding of the technical language of educational planning, who are aware of the roles of the professionals involved, who know what the IEP process entails, who know what the IEP will contain, who comprehend a definite accepted role for themselves at the IEP meeting and are prepared to assume that role — such parents will be able to be positive participants at the IEP meeting. The involvement of such parents will allow educators to use the limited time available at the IEP meeting to address the pupil's needs rather than answering the parent's basic questions. Such parents are much less likely to become involved in an appeal.

The IEP Parent Involvement Training Guide provides materials and methods for preparing parents for positive, active involvement in the IEP process. The training sessions described in the guide should provide parents with all the information they require for such involvement. In conducting the actual training, the developers of the guide have found that the sessions can do a great deal more. The training sessions can demonstrate to the parents that educators really do care and do want to listen to their concerns.

In the course of the training sessions, the parent is exposed to a broader outlook. The parent begins to recognize the difficulties that educators face in designing exactly the right program for each child and fitting that program into the context of a particular school. Parents come to the training sessions with particular concerns about the educational programs of their children. Through the sessions parents begin to feel a sense of participation in the IEP process and a realization that their children and other handicapped children are best served through the judicious allocation of available resources.

One of the primary results of the training sessions is that parents approach the IEP meeting in a more relaxed frame of mind. Supportive encounters with educators and other parents do much to dispel the tensions a parent naturally feels prior to the IEP meeting.

The training sessions also offer an appropriate means of dealing with parents who are angry concerning some aspect of their child's educational program or their previous encounters with school personnel. In many cases such feelings may be the result of misinformation. In other cases a chance to air a grievance before a concerned audience does much to dispel anger. In any case, the training session is a more appropriate setting for dealing with angry feelings than the IEP meeting.

In our experience the vast majority of parents are fairminded people who merely want to get the best possible service for their children. Parent training sessions are a good way for educators to demonstrate that they share and support this intent.

USING THE IEP PARENT INVOLVEMENT TRAINING GUIDE

THE LEADER'S ROLE

The group leader plays a key role in assuring the success of the training sessions. The leader must do everything possible to establish a supportive, open climate within the group. A good leader will allow the parents opportunities for self-expression and discussion and will encourage contributions from each participant.

A good leader will balance individual needs with the demands of the task throughout the series, remaining conscious of the constraints of time, but taking time to address some of the specific concerns of group members.

If a group member asks a specific question that would require considerable time to answer and is not within the scope of the activity, the leader may refer the group member to appropriate resource materials or persons.

The leader should, whenever possible, relate the personal concerns of parents to the specific activities outlined in the guide.

STRUCTURE OF THE TRAINING GUIDE

The Training Guide consists of six units. Each unit contains an introductory page outlining the objectives and rationale. It also contains a list of unit activities and directions for using unit materials.

Each unit contains from one to three activities. When a unit contains more than one activity, the unit directions provide suggested criteria for selecting the appropriate activity or activities for a particular group.

A "Directions" sheet is provided for each activity. It outlines the purpose, the estimated time, the required materials and the procedures to follow in conducting the activity.

Activities are, whenever appropriate, accompanied by "proposed scripts." These scripts provide an effective presentation of the material to be covered couched in simple language. The leader may either read or paraphrase these scripts.

A series of overhead transparencies accompany each proposed script. Overheads are numbered and correspond with numbered cues within the script. The group leader should provide parents with copies of the overheads and encourage them to take notes directly on the copies.

Some activities involve worksheets and suggested reference materials to be shared with participants. The annotated resource section of the training guide provides a list of additional materials.

USING THE TRAINING GUIDE

The materials contained in the Training Guide may be presented in a variety of ways. The six units that follow may be presented at six short meetings or at as few as two longer meetings. Whatever the constraints of available time and space, all six units should be presented though particular units may be considerably condensed. It is also strongly recommended that the units be presented in the given sequence.

It should be noted that Units Five and Six are particularly important. These units focus on the actual involvement of parents in the IEP meeting. The leader should therefore devote special attention to these units. Earlier units focus on providing parents with an appropriate knowledge base concerning the IEP and the IEP process.

It is recommended that the number of participants in each group involved in the training sessions be limited to twelve. Many of the activities in the Training Guide are designed specifically for presentation to small groups.

If constraints on time and available personnel dictate presentation to larger groups, the group leader should modify his/her presentation accordingly.

To ensure maximum effectiveness of the training sessions, the sessions should be given at times which allow both mothers and fathers to participate.

Group leaders should consider tailoring presentation of this material to meet the special needs of particular parents or groups of parents. Particular consideration should be given to those who have difficulty speaking, reading or writing English.

The group leader should read the directions of each unit carefully prior to presentation. Methods and procedures vary from unit to unit.

Group leaders should take a creative approach to the Training Guide, making additions to and changes in particular units to reflect the local situation or to meet the needs of a particular group of parents.

Group leaders should strive to assess the needs of their group and meet those needs. It is not to be expected that all parents will develop a perfect understanding of the materials presented in the Training Guide. The leader should strive to improve the individual parent's understanding of the IEP process, and, more importantly, to leave the parent with a very definite feeling that educators are helpful and sincere about parental involvement in the IEP.

A list of additional resource materials is provided in the annotated resource section. Copies of this list should be given to parents. Ordering or purchasing these resources as supplementary materials is recommended.

Group leaders should provide parents with folders containing the materials associated with activities and other related resource materials for use throughout the series of training sessions.

EVALUATION

Each unit includes a unit evaluation. This evaluation provides the group leader with a means of assessing the degree to which the objectives of the unit have been met by his/her presentation.

Getting Acquainted

Unit Introduction
Activity 1: Hello Everybody
Activity 2: Why Parent Training?
Activity 3: Getting Acquainted
Unit Evaluation

UNIT INTRODUCTION

COMMENTARY:

The activities in Unit One are designed to provide participants with an opportunity to meet each other, to listen to an overview of the entire series of training sessions and to begin sharing their own experiences and concerns related to the IEP process.

Unit One should establish the open, supportive environment necessary for successful training sessions.

During the course of the Unit One activities, the group leader will begin to identify the needs of the particular parents involved in order to structure his/her presentation of the following units to meet these needs.

CONTENTS:

Activity 1: **Hello Everybody**

Activity 2: **Why Parent Training?**

Activity 3: **Getting Acquainted**

UNIT DIRECTIONS:

"Hello Everybody" provides a means of introducing people to each other. If the group participants are already familiar with each other, it may be omitted.

"Why Parent Training" is an introduction to this series of training sessions and should therefore be presented to all groups.

"Getting Acquainted" is the critical activity of this unit and will require skill in group process. The idea is to get the parents to talk about their own concerns and experiences related to the IEP process. Ideally, every member of the group will participate. "Getting Acquainted" should be presented to all groups.

HELLO EVERYBODY

PURPOSE:

To introduce members of the parent group.

TIME:

15 - 20 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Each participant will introduce another member.

MATERIAL:

None.

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader begins by stating the purpose of the activity to the group. The leader then asks each person to choose a partner. The leader encourages participants to pick partners who are not their friends. The leader asks each participant to interview his/her partner for three minutes. At the end of the three minutes the leader asks participants to switch roles. Following the exchange of information, each person then introduces his/her partner to the group sharing information from the interview.

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WHY PARENT TRAINING?

PURPOSE:

To provide participants with an overview of the entire series of training sessions.

TIME:

20 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Leader will present items outlined in Overhead 1 and invite discussion of same.

MATERIAL:

- Proposed script
- Overhead 1
- Copies of Overhead 1 to be provided to participants
- Newsprint/Blackboard

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader should review the proposed script prior to presentation.

The group leader begins the presentation by explaining the purpose of the activity to the group and handing out copies of the overhead. The leader presents the material contained in the script, ideally in his/her own words, making reference to the accompanying overhead display. The group leader uses newsprint or a blackboard to summarize the main points of the presentation.

At appropriate points during the presentation the leader should make mention of the intended schedule for future meetings.

WHY PARENT TRAINING?

PROPOSED SCRIPT

We're going to begin by looking at why these training sessions are necessary. We will be trying to help you prepare for effective participation in the meetings that you will be attending with school people to draw up an individualized education program for your child, what we call an IEP.

Involving parents in the process of developing an IEP is a new idea and we think it's a good one. Your right to be at these meetings is written into both federal and state law.

As parents, you have watched your children grow up. You know more about your child than anyone else. You can very definitely contribute some important information at an IEP meeting. Not only that, your child is a continuing responsibility for you. You want to know what is being done to prepare your child for his or her future life, and what you can do, as a parent, to help the school.

Being involved in the IEP process will probably teach you a lot about the problems that educators face. The problem is to provide a program which suits the individual needs of each child — the particular set of strengths and weaknesses, the individual personality, all the things that make your child a unique person. And, of course, your child is not the only one. The school people who are involved in the IEP are very busy. Not only do they have many children who need IEPs, they also must keep going back and updating each IEP.

This brings us to an important rule: don't just get angry, get on the phone. If something has happened and you think the school should know it, or for that matter, if nothing is happening when you think something should be, don't get angry, get on the phone. Try to help the school provide your child with the kind of service he or she needs and deserves.

Let's look now at the things that you will need to be an effective participant at the IEP meeting (Overhead 1).

First of all, there's the law, the federal and state laws and regulations that relate to special education and to the IEP itself. These laws define your rights as a parent and the rights of your child with regard to the educational system. You should know something about these laws.

Secondly, it's necessary that you be somewhat familiar with the language that educators use. Educational planning has a vocabulary all its own and this vocabulary is highly technical.

Thirdly, you have to understand the IEP process and we'll go through that from the very beginning. We'll talk about the things that precede the IEP meeting, the meeting itself and what happens after the meeting.

Fourthly, you have to know what an IEP consists of, what your child's program should contain.

And finally, we will be trying to help you develop a set of skills you will need for actual participation at the IEP meeting.

WHY PARENT TRAINING ?

— TO UNDERSTAND

- LAW
- LANGUAGE
- IEP COMPONENTS
- IEP PROCESS

— TO DEVELOP SKILL

FOR PARTICIPATION IN IEP MEETINGS

Unit 1 — Activity 2
Overhead 1

GETTING ACQUAINTED

PURPOSE:

- To open communication among group members.
- To create an awareness of the identities and concerns of group members.
- To identify the particular needs of group members and to determine what information should be emphasized in subsequent activities.

TIME:

45 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Completion of a brief questionnaire followed by sharing of concerns of group members.

MATERIAL:

- Personal Questionnaire (Worksheet 1)
- Newsprint/Blackboard

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity. The leader then requests each participant to complete a personal questionnaire which will serve as a basis for discussion and be collected at the end of the session.

Following the completion of the questionnaire, the leader asks each person to introduce himself/herself by sharing the following information:

- name
- a description of the child
- personal experience with IEP
- reason for attending this meeting
- what he/she would like to know about the IEP process

In order to stimulate this discussion the leader should begin by making his/her own personal statement. The leader should do everything possible to encourage the individual expressions of participants.

The leader records the participants' comments concerning why they are attending the training session and what they would like to know about the IEP process on newsprint or a blackboard. The leader should respond directly but briefly to concerns and/or questions about the IEP process, noting those concerns and/or questions that will be addressed in greater detail at future sessions.

The leader then collects the questionnaires. Questionnaires and notes should be used by the leader in determining the emphasis of future activities.

The group leader should take a sensitive approach to parents who have difficulties expressing themselves in writing. The leader should also consider that some parents may be unable to read or write English.

PERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Description of my child: _____

2. My experience with IEP: _____

3. My reason for attending this meeting: _____

4. What I would like to know about the IEP process: _____

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GETTING ACQUAINTED

EVALUATION

1. The way that this unit provided an introduction to the upcoming training sessions was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

2. The overall usefulness of this introductory activity for me was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

3. The organization of the activity was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

4. I thought that the group leader's presentation was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

5. The strengths of this activity were:

6. The weaknesses of this activity were:

Unit 2

IEP And The Law

Unit Introduction
Review of Federal Laws and New Jersey State Regulations
Unit Evaluation

UNIT INTRODUCTION

COMMENTARY:

Unit Two is designed to assist parents in gaining a basic knowledge of the laws and regulations affecting the education of the handicapped. Unit Two also attempts to provide parents with an understanding of the relationship between the IEP and the relevant laws and regulations.

The specific requirements of federal law and state regulation largely define the IEP process and, of course, the IEP itself. A review of the laws and regulations that relate, directly or indirectly, to the IEP provides parents with a necessary background for the discussion of the IEP in the units that follow, as well as useful information about their own rights and the rights of their child with regard to the educational system.

CONTENTS:

Review of Federal Laws and New Jersey Regulations as They Relate to the IEP.

UNIT DIRECTIONS:

Unit Two consists of a single activity, a review of relevant laws and regulations. This review may either be presented in detail or condensed depending on the needs of the group and the constraints of time.

REVIEW OF FEDERAL LAWS AND NEW JERSEY REGULATIONS AS THEY RELATE TO THE IEP

PURPOSE:

To assist parents in gaining a basic knowledge of the laws and regulations affecting the education of handicapped children.

TIME:

40 Minutes

STRATEGY:

The group leader presents a review of relevant laws and regulations and conducts a discussion.

MATERIAL:

- Proposed script
- Overhead transparencies 2-5
- Copies of the overheads to be provided to participants

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader should review the proposed script prior to presentation.

The group leader begins the presentation by stating the purpose of the activity and providing copies of the overheads to participants. The group leader presents the information contained in the proposed script making reference to the related overheads.

The review of laws and regulations presented in Unit Two is very general and will probably generate a considerable number of questions from participants.

This review of laws and regulations may not appear to be exciting and perhaps not even interesting; discussions of laws and regulations rarely are. Group leaders will find, however, that parents really do want this information! Lively presentation and opportunities for discussion will make it easier for participants to attend to this material.

REVIEW OF FEDERAL LAWS AND NEW JERSEY REGULATIONS

AS THEY RELATE TO THE IEP

PROPOSED SCRIPT

We are going to consider some points about the IEP and the law. The reason for doing this is that you really cannot talk about the IEP without talking about federal laws and state regulations. Such laws and regulations present, in detail, what has to be done in the IEP process, what the IEP must contain, and what has to be done about the IEP after it's developed. The laws and regulations define your rights and your child's rights with regard to education.

The laws and regulations we will be discussing are lengthy documents written in very precise language. We can't do much more than give general impressions in a review as short as this one. If you have a specific question about a particular law or regulation, this review will probably not do more than tell you where you might look to find the answer. For any very specific information, you should look at the law or regulation itself.

We've had occasion to mention Public Law 94-142 before. You will hear a lot about it in these sessions. Public Law 94-142 is a federal law and is the cornerstone of education for handicapped children in the United States. The law itself makes pretty dry reading as you will discover when you see pieces of it during these sessions (Overhead 2). What Public Law 94-142 provides is, however, exciting. This law, also known as The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, does a great deal to guarantee an appropriate education for all handicapped pupils. Before the passage of this law, the services provided to handicapped pupils varied from state to state. Public Law 94-142 is an effort to bring all states up to a minimum level in providing services to handicapped pupils.

Let's look at some of the assurances of Public Law 94-142 (Overhead 3):

- A free and appropriate public education is to be made available to all handicapped children.
- Every effort must be made to locate and identify children who are handicapped.
- Before a school district can evaluate a child or change his or her educational program, the parents must be informed and must give their permission.
- Tests and other evaluation materials used in the classification and placement of handicapped children in a school or program must be given in such a way as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory. Tests and test results are to be given in language which can be understood by both parents and child.

- Each handicapped child is to have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Handicapped and non-handicapped children are to be educated together as much as possible.
- There must be policies and procedures to protect the confidentiality of data and information.
- Parents have a right to due process procedures, to register a complaint or appeal if they feel that their child's program is inadequate.
- Surrogates are appointed to act for any child when parents or guardians are either unknown or unavailable or when the child is a legal ward of the state.

For several years New Jersey has made provision for many of the basic services spelled out in Public Law 94-142. In fact, our state laws and regulations served as one of the models for the federal legislation. New Jersey's laws were essentially in compliance with 94-142 when it was passed.

However, Public Law 94-142 has still had an impact on education in New Jersey. 94-142 specifically requires that parents be involved in the IEP process. You'll note how that involvement was spelled out in the provisions just mentioned. Involving parents in educational planning in this manner is an innovation — it's an entirely new thing. The New Jersey Department of Education is committed to parent involvement. We, the local school district, want to make it work and that's why these training sessions are being held.

We will take up New Jersey law later in this session. There is another piece of federal legislation which greatly affects the lives of handicapped children; that is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (return to overhead 2). This act prohibits discrimination on the basis of physical and mental handicaps in any program that receives federal money. The regulation issued in April 1977 goes one step further. It provides that programs receiving federal money must be accessible to handicapped persons. The word "accessible" is carefully chosen. Programs must be "accessible" in a physical sense; wheelchair ramps and other means of physical access must be provided. The other sense of the word, "accessible" is a little harder to explain. You might put it this way, the people who run any program that receives federal money must make an effort to involve the handicapped.

Section 504 makes specific references to the IEP and also affects many aspects of educational institutions. Section 504 covers many aspects of a child's life that are unrelated to education. If you think of the range of programs that receive federal money, you will see what I mean.

We will now briefly cover New Jersey's laws and regulations as they relate to the education of the handicapped (Overhead 4).

State laws and regulations are of immediate concern to parents in that these laws and regulations actually carry out the provisions of the various federal laws we have been discussing. Over the past several years New Jersey has been refining and reworking the state regulations governing the education of handicapped children in order to achieve complete compliance with federal law.

The laws that govern the services provided to handicapped children are known as the New Jersey Statutes Annotated 18A:46.

The laws are general statements. The regulations and rules, the interpretations of the law, are contained in the New Jersey Administrative Code. The Administrative Code is updated as often as is necessary.

The New Jersey Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 28, Sub-chapters 1-10 — these regulations apply to the full range of educational services provided to handicapped pupils. The most recent revision of this Chapter became effective August 11, 1978.

Chapter 3, Subchapter 2 of the Administrative Code, entitled *Pupil Records*, deals with the responsibilities of local school districts to maintain, compile, regulate access to and assure security of pupil records. The most recent revision of this Chapter became effective on March 7, 1978.

That ends our review of laws and regulations. No one expects you to be an expert on this subject. If you have a specific question about the law as it relates to your child or you require an interpretation of a specific provision of the laws or regulations, consult someone who is knowledgeable. The New Jersey Department of Education has twenty-one Offices of County Superintendents of Schools. A supervisor of child study is available in each of these offices to assist parents in understanding special education laws and services. In addition, there are state staff members in regional offices located in each of the four Educational Improvement Centers (EIC's), as well as local district personnel who are available to assist parents when problems arise regarding special education programs and services. (The group leader should provide information on the appropriate means of contacting these resources.)

Many of these laws and regulations bear directly or indirectly on the IEP.

From the different pieces of the law we might put together a definition of the IEP that conforms with the letter of the law. The IEP is a written document developed by a team including both educators and parents to provide services for a pupil who is classified as educationally handicapped.

If we look at the spirit of the law, a much broader picture emerges (Overhead 5).

1. The IEP is a philosophy of education for handicapped children. The IEP is founded on a belief that each child is unique, is like no one else in the world, and deserves to be given special attention.

2. The IEP is a process through which the needs of a child are detemined and specific means to meet those needs are developed. The IEP process involves both educators and parents.

3. The IEP is a plan, a written statement which tells exactly what the school intends to do for the child. The IEP is intended to be used, not filed away.

We have traced the IEP from its origins in federal law through its presence in state laws and regulations. Future sessions will bring us to the local level, where all of these laws and regulations are put into action.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

PUBLIC LAW 94-142

Education For All
Handicapped Children
Act of 1975

PUBLIC LAW 93-112

Rehabilitation
Act Of 1973
Section 504

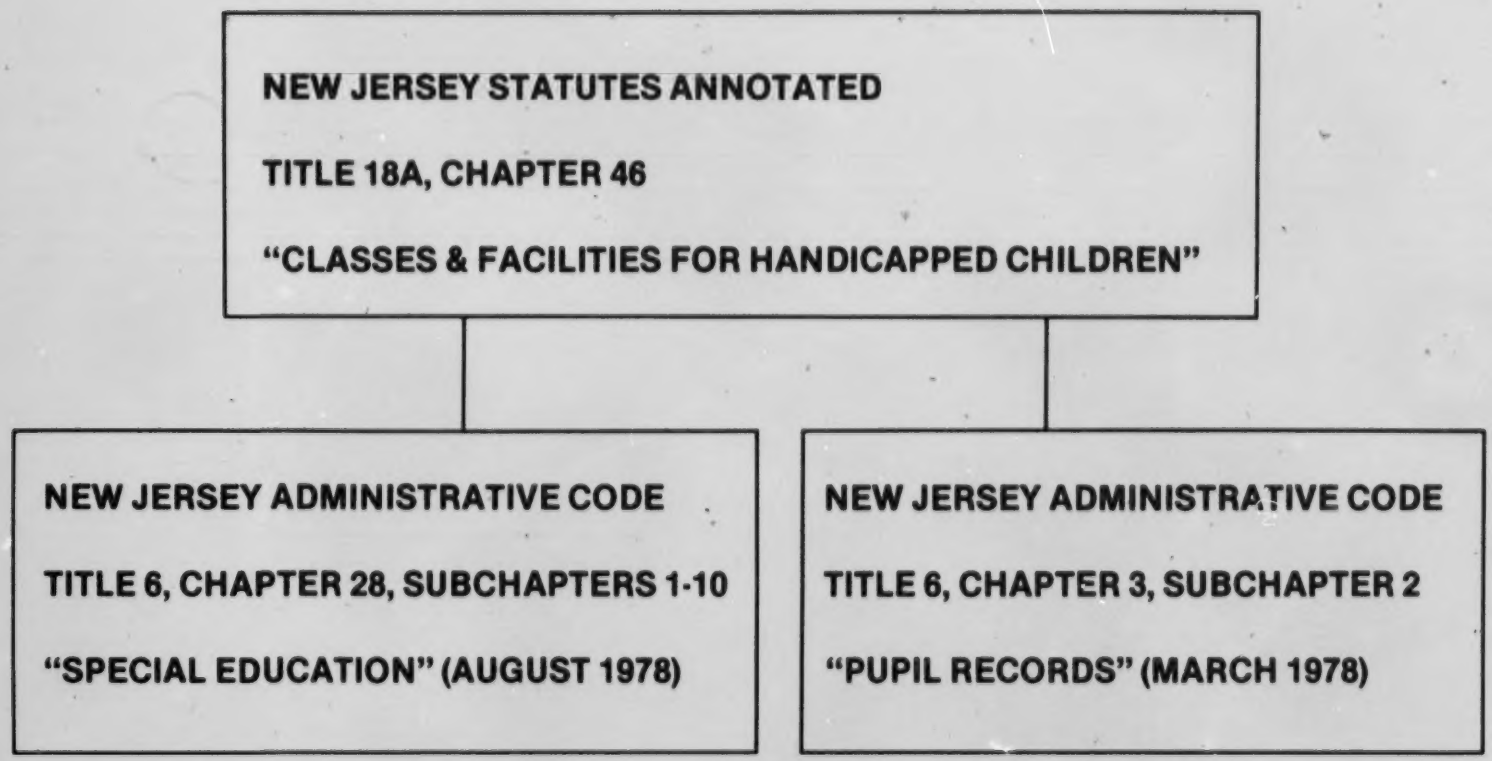
Unit 2
Overhead 2

SUMMARY OF ASSURANCES OF PUBLIC LAW 94-142

- FAPE
- IDENTIFICATION
- NOTIFICATION AND CONSENT
- PROTECTION IN EVALUATION PROCEDURES
- INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM
- PARENTAL PARTICIPATION
- LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT
- CONFIDENTIALITY
- DUE PROCESS
- SURROGATE PARENT

Unit 2
Overhead 3

STATE LEGISLATION/REGULATIONS


NEW JERSEY STATUTES ANNOTATED
TITLE 18A, CHAPTER 46
"CLASSES & FACILITIES FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN"
NEW JERSEY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE
TITLE 6, CHAPTER 28, SUBCHAPTERS 1-10
"SPECIAL EDUCATION" (AUGUST 1978)
NEW JERSEY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE
TITLE 6, CHAPTER 3, SUBCHAPTER 2
"PUPIL RECORDS" (MARCH 1978)

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Unit 2
Overhead 4

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Unit 2
Overhead 5

IEP AND THE LAW

EVALUATION

1. My knowledge of special education laws and regulations prior to this activity was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

2. The extent this activity increased my knowledge about special education laws is:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

3. The overall usefulness of this activity for me is:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

4. The organization of the activity was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

5. I thought that the leader's presentation was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

6. The strengths of this activity were:

7. The weaknesses of this activity were:

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Unit 3

Understanding I E P Terms

Unit Introduction
Activity 1: Glossary Review
Activity 2: Glossary Puzzle
Activity 3: Discovered Definitions
Unit Evaluation

UNIT INTRODUCTION

COMMENTARY:

Unit Three is designed to help parents increase their understanding and knowledge of educational terms related to the IEP process. Such understanding and knowledge will make parents more effective participants in the IEP meeting.

CONTENTS:

Activity 1: **Glossary Review**

Activity 2: **Glossary Puzzle**

Activity 3: **Discovered Definitions**

UNIT DIRECTIONS:

The group leader should choose the appropriate activities for his/her group.

"Glossary Review" is essentially a review and discussion of IEP terms and should be presented to all groups. If there are severe constraints on available time, the group leader may decide to leave it at that, noting that group members may use the glossary as a reference throughout the IEP process.

"Glossary Puzzle" is a game involving matching IEP terms with their definitions. This activity should be used if the group leader determines that his/her group might benefit from a playful learning activity that will improve the group's knowledge of educational terms.

"Discovered Definitions" involves a "brainstorming" session concerning IEP terms. This activity requires a degree of sophistication on the part of the group and considerable skill on the part of the group leader. Leaders who have no experience in "brainstorming" should probably avoid this activity.

GLOSSARY REVIEW

PURPOSE:

To clarify educational terms related to the IEP process.

TIME:

60 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Parents discuss IEP terms and the group leader assists the group in understanding the definitions of the terms.

MATERIAL:

- IEP Glossary (Worksheet 2)
- Classification of the Educationally Handicapped (Reference Material)
- Newsprint/Blackboard

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity and distributing the IEP glossary.

The group discusses each term in detail. The leader provides examples to illustrate the term and elicits other examples from the group.

The comments of the group are summarized on newsprint or on a blackboard. The leader encourages the parents to take notes on the glossary itself.

The group leader should place a particular emphasis on those terms marked with an asterisk (*) in the IEP glossary.

IEP GLOSSARY

This is a glossary of educational terms that relate to the special education process in New Jersey. The definitions given are working definitions to help you understand the meaning of these terms as they are used in the IEP process. This glossary is designed to be used as a reference material throughout the training sessions.

The IEP has two sections: the Basic Plan and the Instructional Guide. Each section has several parts or components. These IEP sections and components are marked with an asterisk (*) in this glossary.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT — The scholastic skills, abilities and knowledge that a pupil has mastered.

***ANNUAL GOALS** — A component of the IEP which states what a pupil can reasonably be expected to achieve in one year's time.

ANNUAL REVIEW — A yearly examination of the pupil's IEP to determine if any revisions are necessary for the next year's IEP.

BASIC CHILD STUDY TEAM — A School Psychologist, a Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant and a School Social Worker who are responsible, as a team, for determining the eligibility of a pupil for special education and related services and for co-ordinating the development of individualized education programs for educationally handicapped pupils. The basic child study team acts in consultation with a school physician.

***BASIC PLAN** — A section of the IEP which is the overall description of the pupil's individualized education program developed for the pupil at a meeting attended by parents and school personnel.

CLASSIFICATION — 1. An educational term to describe a child's handicapping condition. 2. The process of determining a child's eligibility for special education and related services.

COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION — The complete study of the psychological, educational, social and health status of a child conducted by the child study team. This study is based on information gathered from a variety of sources including parents and teachers.

IEP GLOSSARY

CONSENT — Written permission given by the parent to the local district to act on behalf of the pupil.

***EVALUATION PROCEDURES** — A component of the IEP which provides a description of how the objectives of a pupil's IEP will be examined to determine if a pupil has achieved what he/she was expected to achieve. The methods used might include teacher observation, interviews with parents, formal and informal evaluation techniques and pupil performance data collected through local teaching programs, among other things.

***IMPLEMENTATION** — A component of the IEP that describes the specific responsibilities and timelines for IEP participants in order to implement various aspects of the IEP. Specific assignments may be allocated to any of the following: child study team member(s), teacher(s), parent(s), and other specialists.

***INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM** — A written plan for a pupil who has been determined to be eligible for special education and related services. The IEP outlines why the pupil is classified as educationally handicapped and specifies means of meeting the particular educational needs of the pupil. The IEP consists of two sections: the Basic Plan and the Instructional Guide.

***INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE** — A section of the IEP which is the plan developed jointly by designated child study team member(s) and teachers to aid in carrying out a pupil's individualized education program. This plan includes the student's program schedule; instructional methods; techniques and activities to support personal-social development; and special instructional media and materials to be used to meet the pupil's unique needs.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES — Specific methods and materials that will be used in teaching the pupil.

LEARNING STYLE — The pupil's learning characteristics and how the pupil processes information.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT — An educational placement which allows the pupil to have as much involvement with non-handicapped pupils as appropriate while, at the same time, providing the pupil with an appropriate educational program.

IEP GLOSSARY

MAINSTREAMING — Involving the pupil in regular educational activities to the extent he/she is able to profit.

MEDIA — Any special equipment or aids needed to support the educational program developed for the child. It may include such items as filmstrips, cassettes, records, films, etc.

NATIVE LANGUAGE — The dominant language normally used by a person in his/her home.

***OBJECTIVES** — The specific, intermediate steps that must be taken to reach the annual goals, a component of the IEP.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT — The ability of the pupil to assume personal and social responsibilities expected of persons of similar age. It includes such areas as self concept and the ability to get along with others.

PHYSICAL AND HEALTH STATUS — A description of the pupil's present physical condition and any medical factors which influence his/her ability to learn.

PRE-VOCATIONAL SKILLS — Programs, services or activities designed to provide pupils with orientation, guidance exploration and instruction to assist them in making meaningful career decisions and planning an appropriate vocational education program.

REFERRAL — The process of bringing a pupil to the attention of a basic child study team to determine if the pupil is educationally handicapped.

***RELATED SERVICES** — A component of the IEP that describes those support services that relate to the special needs of the child such as speech correction, transportation, counselling, occupational training and physical therapy. These services are given to assist a handicapped pupil to benefit from a free and appropriate education.

IEP GLOSSARY

SELF-HELP SKILLS — The abilities related to feeding, dressing and other skills necessary for functioning in a family, school and community.

SPECIAL EDUCATION — Individually designed free instructional services that meet the unique educational needs of a handicapped pupil.

***STATEMENTS OF FINDINGS** — A component of the IEP which provides a descriptive summary of a pupil's present performance in school and the pupil's present strengths and needs, based on the comprehensive evaluation.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION — Organized educational programs which are directly related to the preparation of individuals for paid or unpaid employment.

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CLASSIFICATION OF THE EDUCATIONALLY HANDICAPPED

In addition to familiarity with the above IEP terms, parents should have an *exact* understanding of the classification that has been applied to their child. The following classifications are used to define educationally handicapping conditions in New Jersey. The definitions have been taken directly from New Jersey regulations.

"AUDITORILY HANDICAPPED" means an inability to hear within normal limits due to physical impairment or dysfunction of auditory mechanisms as distinguished by the following:

a. "Deaf" means loss of hearing, which is so severe that the pupil is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification and educational information is adversely affected;

b. "Hard of hearing" means a loss of hearing, which may be permanent or fluctuating and adversely affects a pupil's educational performance, but which is not severe enough to warrant classification of a pupil as "deaf."

"CHRONICALLY ILL" means a temporary or permanent health condition which makes it impractical to receive adequate instruction through a regular school program and is distinguished by the following:

a. "Chronic illness" means a chronic condition such as tuberculosis, lowered vitality, cardiac condition, leukemia, asthma, seizure disorders, or other physical disabilities which make it impracticable for the child to receive adequate instruction through the regular school program;

b. "Eligible for home instruction" means a temporary illness or injury which requires individualized instruction be provided to pupils confined to their homes or hospitals for a short period of time as determined by the school physician.

"COMMUNICATION HANDICAPPED" means impaired native speech or language that is outside the range of acceptable variation and adversely affects a pupil's educational performance and/or interpersonal relationships and is not due primarily to hearing impairment as defined under "Auditorily handicapped," as distinguished by the following:

a. "Communication handicapped" means a communication disorder in native speech or language to a severe extent which seriously interferes with the ability to use oral language to communicate;

b. "Eligible for speech correction services" means a condition characterized by the presence of defective and incorrect sounds, including substitutions, omissions, additions, distortions of the speech sounds and other speech impediments as defined in rules and regulations pursuant to Public Law 94-142 which require individualized instruction by a speech correctionist, (and is not due primarily to hearing impairment as defined under "Auditorily handicapped"). This definition does not include pupils participating in language programs conducted by speech correctionists on a general basis.

"EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED" means the exhibiting of behavioral disorders over an extended period of time which adversely affects educational performance and may be characterized by any of the following manifestations: an inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors; an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships; inappropriate behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances; a general or pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; and/or the development of physical symptoms or irrational fears relating to personal or school problems. This definition does not include social maladjustment as described in these regulations.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE EDUCATIONALLY HANDICAPPED

"MENTALLY RETARDED" means possessing an intellectual capacity below the average range of intelligence and having deficits in adaptive behavior which adversely affect educational performance and social functioning as distinguished by the following:

a. "Educable" means a level of retardation which is characterized by intellectual capacity, as measured by a clinical test of intelligence, within a range encompassing approximately one and one-half to three standard deviations below the mean and a low level of ability to think abstractly;

b. "Trainable" means a level of retardation which is characterized by intellectual capacity, as measured by a standardized clinical test of intelligence, which falls beyond three standard deviations below the mean; an inability to use symbols in the solution of problems of even low complexity; and an inability to function socially without direct and close supervision;

c. "Eligible for day training" means a level of retardation charcterized by an inability to give evidence to a basic child study team of understanding and responding in a positive manner to simple directions expressed in the mode of primary communication and to express basic wants or needs due to mental retardation.

"MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED" means the presence of two or more educationally handicapping conditions which interact and result in problems so complex that placement in programs designed for a single handicapping condition will not result in significantly meaningful educational growth and achievement. All such educational handicaps shall be indicated for classification of the pupil. Eligibility for speech correction services as defined in these regulations shall not be indicated as one of the handicapping conditions which form the basis for a pupil being classified "Multiply handicapped."

"NEUROLOGICALLY OR PERCEPTUALLY IMPAIRED" means impairment in the ability to process information due to physiological, organizational or integrational internal dysfunction which is not the result of any other handicapping condition as defined in these regulations. The condition is distinguished by the following:

a. "Neurologically impaired" means a severe and specific impairment, disorder or dysfunction of the central or peripheral nervous system which adversely affects the educational performance of a pupil and is not manifested as any other educationally handicapping conditions described in these regulations.

b. "Perceptually impaired" means the exhibiting of a specific learning disability due to a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding and learning and which affects the ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell and learn arithmetic to the extent that special education and related services are necessary for achievement and successful performance in an educational program. This definition does not include the manifestation of learning problems which are due primarily to any of the other educationally handicapping conditions described in these regulations or to environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

"ORTHOPEDICALLY HANDICAPPED" means a condition which, because of malformation, malfunction or loss of bones, muscle, or body tissue, necessitates special education or related services, special equipment, or special facilities to permit functioning of normal learning processes, participation in regular school activities and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE EDUCATIONALLY HANDICAPPED

"SOCIALLY MALADJUSTED" means a pattern of social interaction which is characterized by conflicts which cannot be resolved adequately with the assistance of authority figures, or behavior that seriously interferes with the well-being or the property of others and is not due to emotional disturbance as defined in these regulations.

"VISUALLY HANDICAPPED" means an inability to use ocular mechanisms to see within normal limits as defined by the following:

a. "Blind" means a condition in which visual acuity, with correction, is 20/200 or poorer in the better eye and which necessitates a knowledge and skill in the use of special devices or techniques, such as Braille, for educational purposes;

b. "Partially sighted" means a condition in which visual acuity, with correction, is 20/70 or poorer in either eye, or, as a result of some other factors involved in visual functioning, inhibits the effective functioning in a learning environment without special education or related services.

GLOSSARY PUZZLE

PURPOSE:

To allow parents to test their knowledge of IEP terms.

TIME:

45 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Matching IEP terms with their related definitions.

MATERIAL:

- IEP Glossary (Worksheet 2, Unit 3, Activity 1)

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

Prior to presentation, the group leader prepares envelopes containing IEP terms that have been separated from their definitions. Those terms marked with an asterisk (*) in the IEP Glossary should be used for this activity. A maximum of ten terms should be used.

The group leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity.

The leader divides the group into teams. Each team is given an envelope containing IEP terms that have "accidentally" become separated from their definitions.

The leader encourages the teams to compete with each other in putting the terms and their definitions together again.

DISCOVERED DEFINITIONS

PURPOSE:

To provide parents with the opportunity to clarify their perception and understanding of educational terms related to the IEP.

TIME:

120 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Group members "brainstorm" words related to the IEP terms. These words are used in conjunction with the definitions of IEP terms to formulate new statements concerning the terms.

MATERIAL:

- IEP Glossary Worksheet (Worksheet 3)
- IEP Glossary (Worksheet 2, Unit 3, Activity 1)
- Newsprint/Blackboard
- Stopwatch

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity and distributing the IEP Glossary Worksheet to all participants.

The group leader asks the group to "brainstorm" words related to each term on the worksheet for one minute. Group members are to suggest words that they feel are related to each term without commenting on any of the choices of particular words. The group's responses are recorded on newsprint or a blackboard.

The group leader distributes the IEP Glossary. The group then uses the definitions of the words, together with the "brainstormed" responses to formulate new statements about the term. The group uses worksheets to record these statements. The leader records the statements on newsprint or blackboard.

IEP GLOSSARY WORKSHEET

ANNUAL GOAL

ANNUAL REVIEW

BASIC CHILD STUDY TEAM

BASIC PLAN

CLASSIFICATION

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

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IEP GLOSSARY WORKSHEET

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

MAINSTREAMING

OBJECTIVES

RELATED SERVICES

STATEMENTS OF FINDINGS

UNDERSTANDING IEP TERMS

EVALUATION

1. Prior to this activity my knowledge of educational terms presented was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

2. The extent this activity increased my knowledge about educational terms was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

3. The overall usefulness of this activity for me was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

4. The organization of the activity was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

5. I thought that the leader's presentation was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

6. The strengths of this activity were:

7. The weaknesses of this activity were:

The IEP In The Local Education Process

Unit Introduction
Review of the Local Special Education Process
Unit Evaluation

UNIT INTRODUCTION

COMMENTARY:

Unit Four is designed to make parents aware of the local special education process from identification to placement. This should provide parents with an important knowledge base for meaningful participation in the IEP.

Since each local district approaches the special education process individually, this unit is necessarily incomplete. The group leader should provide materials and resources that describe the local process.

Despite the efforts of local educators, most parents know very little about the process of identification and classification and do not have a specific understanding of the roles of the professionals involved.

In fact, some parents may resent the classification of their child. It is important to show them that this classification was the result of a thorough evaluation.

Unit Four offers parents an opportunity to discover how they got to this point in the process and where they are going.

CONTENTS:

The IEP in the Local Special Education Process

UNIT DIRECTIONS:

The group leader should take a creative approach to this unit. We recommend inviting the personnel of a child study team to come to this session and explain what each team member does throughout the special education process. Actually meeting these professionals on an informal basis does much to reduce parent anxiety concerning the IEP meetings.

"The IEP in the Local Special Education Process" consists of an annotated outline that presents a definitive account of the special education process. The annotated outline should not be delivered to any group. This outline is intended as a reference for the group leader in that it provides a framework for the material to be covered. The outline should be used as a means of providing detailed answers to any specific questions participants might ask. Each major section of the outline should be discussed in the course of this session.

REVIEW OF THE IEP IN THE LOCAL SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

PURPOSE:

To make parents aware of the local special education process from identification to placement.

TIME:

60 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Presentation of the local special education process from identification to placement emphasizing the content and process of the IEP.

MATERIAL:

- Annotated Outline
- Overhead transparencies 6-15
- Copies of the overheads to be provided to participants

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader reviews the annotated outline prior to presentation and devises his/her own program for presenting the materials in the outline. Several overheads related to specific sections of the outline are provided.

The leader conducts a discussion of each of the major sections of the outline, either by inviting appropriate resource persons who actually participate in the activities described, or by presenting the material himself/herself with specific reference to local conditions.

The leader should provide ample opportunity for questions and discussion.

REVIEW OF THE IEP IN THE LOCAL SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

ANNOTATED OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION:

To help you understand the district's process of providing services to handicapped pupils it is necessary to discuss the New Jersey special education rules and regulations.

The New Jersey Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 28, which was revised and adopted by the State Board of Education in August 1978, states that:

> "Each local school district is required to identify and classify all handicapped pupils between the ages of 5 and 20 and to provide each pupil identified and classified with a free, appropriate and individualized education program."

Following will be an overview of the special education rules and regulations which explain the district's process from identification through the development of the individualized education program.

IDENTIFICATION (Overhead 6)

Each local board of education is required to adopt written procedures for locating those pupils who reside within the district who may be handicapped and are not receiving a free and appropriate education at public expense. The identification procedure must provide for participation of the instructional, administrative and pupil personnel service staff of the local school district, parents and other professionals or agencies concerned with the welfare of pupils. This means that anyone concerned with the welfare or having knowledge of the special needs of a pupil may bring him or her to the attention of the local school district for consideration for special services.

The Division of Youth and Family Services may identify and classify a pupil under its care when the determination of the local school district's responsibility to provide services to that pupil is unclear, or the local district's determination will cause a delay in the pupil receiving required services. When the responsibility is clear, the district must accept the identification by the Division and refer the pupil to their child study team.

REFERRAL

A pupil who has been identified as being potentially educationally handicapped and considered to require services beyond those available within general education must be referred to the child study team within seven calendar days after parental approval (Overhead 7).

Parents of pupils being considered for referral to the child study team must be provided in writing with the following:

1. The reason for referral;
2. Notice of their due process rights;
3. A description of the procedures that may be used during the evaluation process.

This information must be written in language understandable to the general public and in the native language of the home, if possible.

COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

Following identification and referral of a pupil it becomes the responsibility of the basic child study team to determine the need for evaluation, and proceed, if necessary, with the required evaluations to determine if the pupil is educationally handicapped and in need of special education and related services (Overhead 8). The evaluation must be completed within 60 calendar days from the date that the referral is received by the child study team. The time line may be extended by the chief school administrator if the team presents written evidence that extenuating circumstances prevent them from meeting this time schedule. Such exception must be reported to the Office of the County Superintendent of Schools.

The basic child study team consists of a school psychologist, a school social worker and a learning disabilities teacher-consultant acting in consultation with a physician. The examination results and findings of other specialists are included in the comprehensive evaluation as designated in the rules and regulations. Special examinations by an audiologist, psychiatrist, neurologist or other specialist may be necessary for certain classifications.

The team may also include a school administrator, classroom teacher, school nurse, remedial reading teacher, guidance counselor, occupational therapist, speech correctionist or anyone else who can contribute to the determination of the pupil's needs and to the plan for an educational program that is consistent with those needs.

CLASSIFICATION

The classification of a pupil must be established during a conference attended by the basic child study team and other appropriate professionals. The categories of classification are (Overhead 9):

1) Auditorily Handicapped
   — Deaf
   — Hard of hearing

2) Chronically Ill
   — Chronically ill
   — Eligible for home instruction

3) Communication Handicapped
   — Communication handicapped
   —Eligible for speech correction services

4) Emotionally Disturbed

5) Mentally Retarded
   — Educable
   — Trainable
   — Eligible for day training

6) Multiply Handicapped

7) Neurologically or Perceptually Impaired
   —Neurologically impaired
   —Perceptually impaired

8) Orthopedically Handicapped

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9) Socially Maladjusted

10) Visually Handicapped
— Blind
— Partially sighted

The appropriate classification is used as the basis for planning the individualized education program. A classification is only valid for a period of three years.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

After classification an individualized education program (IEP) is written for the pupil (Overhead 10). The IEP consists of two parts, the Basic Plan Section and the Instructional Guide necessary to assist the teacher or teachers in planning and providing ongoing educational activities.

The Basic Plan section of the IEP *must* be developed at a meeting attended by:

1. The basic child study team;
2. One or both parents;
3. Teacher or teachers having knowledge of the pupil's educational performance;
4. The pupil, where appropriate (Overhead 11).

Administrators, school counselors, speech correctionists and other individuals, in person or via telephone, may be included at the discretion of the parents or local school district.

The IEP conference must be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time and place consistent with the policies developed by the district for this purpose. If neither parent can attend, the local district may use other methods to ensure parental participation, such as individual or conference telephone calls or written information from the parent.

The IEP meeting may be conducted without a parent if the district is unable to convince the parent to attend. However, the district must document its attempt to include the parent.

COMPONENTS OF THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

(Overhead 12)

The **basic plan section** of the individualized education program must include, but is not limited to the following:

1. Statements which describe the pupil's current educational status. These would include academic achievement, intellectual functioning, personal and social adjustment, physical and health status, and, where appropriate, prevocational, vocational and self-help skills.

2. A statement of the team's decision, which determines pupil eligibility for special education (classification) and the related services.

3. A statement of annual goals, which describes the educational performance the pupil is expected to achieve within one year.

4. A statement of objectives, which are the specific, intermediate steps which must be taken to reach the annual goals.

5. A description of the pupil's educational program including:

   a. A statement explaining the rationale for the type of educational program and placement recommended;

   b. An explanation of how the placement is the least restrictive environment appropriate for the pupil;

   c. A description of the extent to which the pupil will participate in regular educational programs.

6. A statement describing the related services necessary to meet the needs of the pupil including:

   a. Description of necessary services;

   b. The date when services will begin;

   c. The length of time the services will be given.

7. An evaluation procedure and schedule must be developed for use in determining whether the program objectives are being achieved.

8. A statement describing each child study team member's role, if any, for implementing the various aspects of the individualized education program.

The parent participates in the development of the **basic plan section** of the IEP.

Following the development of the **basic plan section,** a member(s) of the basic child study team is designated to coordinate the development of an **instructional guide** in cooperation with the staff member(s) responsible for each area of the pupil's individualized education program (Overhead 13).

1. Where appropriate, the **instructional guide** includes but need not be limited to:

   a. A planned schedule of the time the pupil will be served by specialists and/or special education teachers;

   b. Instructional strategies geared to the pupil's learning style;

   c. Techniques and activities designed to support the personal-social development of the pupil;

   d. Any special instructional media and materials which are needed.

The parents must be provided with a copy of the IEP which has been signed by the basic child study team. Parents must agree to the IEP before it can be implemented. If the IEP is approved by the parent, it must be put into effect within 30 school days.

Annually, or more often if necessary, the local school district must review and revise the individualized education program at a meeting with one or both of the pupil's parents. This meeting includes the appropriate member(s) of the basic child study team, the teachers having knowledge of the pupil's educational performance, and the pupil, where appropriate. Administrators, school counselors, speech correctionists and other individuals may be included at the request of the parents or the local school district.

RIGHTS OF DUE PROCESS

New Jersey rules and regulations pertaining to special education and Public Law 94-142 include parents in all steps of referral, evaluation, classification, program planning and placement. Parents are partners with school personnel in planning for their child. As in all partnerships, disagreements may arise (Overhead 14).

If a disagreement arises, the first action would be for the parents and school personnel to discuss the concern. In most cases disagreements are settled. When the disagreement is not settled at the local level, it may be helpful to have a third party take a new look at the problem. New Jersey rules and regulations provide the opportunity to request an administrative review from the Department of Education at either the county or state level.

The administrative review is an informal process focused on resolving disagreements between parents and school personnel. The results of the review are not binding.

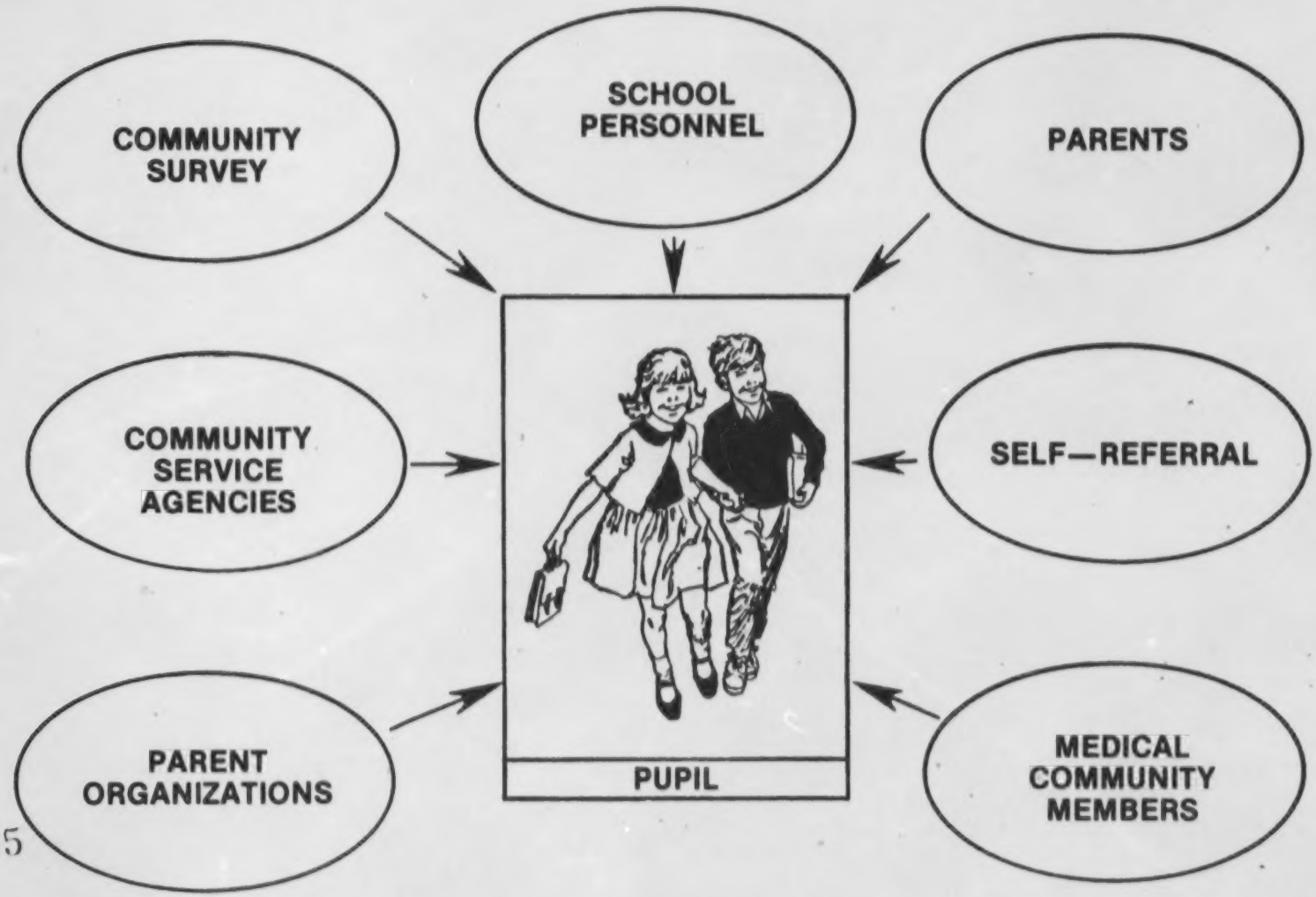
A more formal process, the impartial hearing, is available to parents and to the school district. The decision which results from a hearing is binding unless it is appealed to the Commissioner of Education who may overturn the hearing decision.

Beyond this, an appeal may be made to the State Board of Education and then to the New Jersey Superior Court, Appellate Division. During the appeal process there can be no change in the child's program.

It is permissible to appeal at any level in the process or to appeal in progression from one step to the next. The ultimate goal is to find a solution beneficial to the child.

(Overhead 15 can be shown to review parental involvement in the total special education process.)

IDENTIFICATION OF NEED FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES



Unit 4
Overhead 6

PARENT NOTIFICATION OF REFERRAL

1. REASONS FOR REFERRAL

2. NOTICE OF RIGHTS TO DUE PROCESS

3. DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Unit 4
Overhead 7

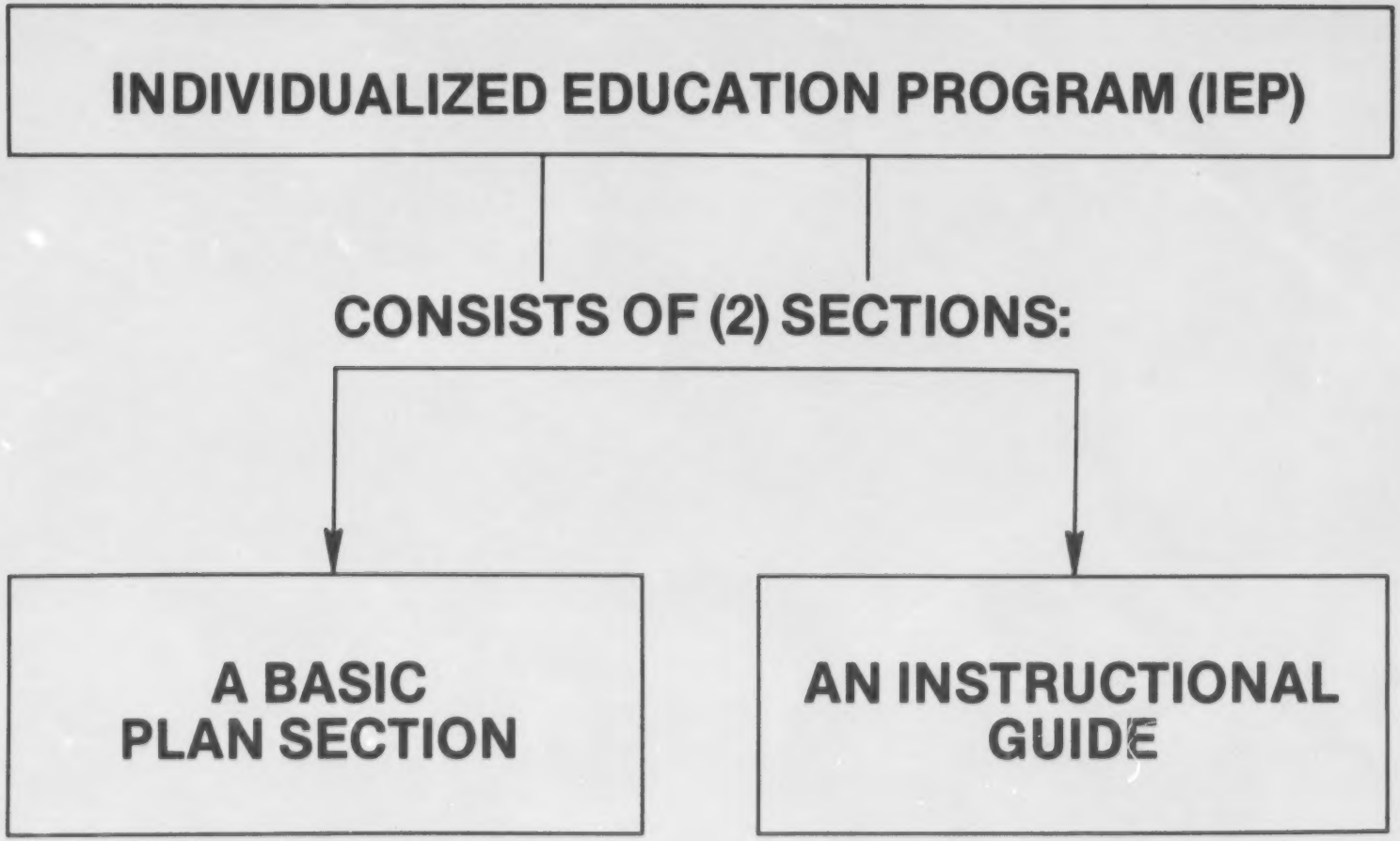
COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION	**Assessment of the intellectual, social, adaptive and emotional development**
EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION	**Observation, history, teacher-conferences, evaluation and analysis of academic performance and learning characteristics**
SOCIAL ASSESSMENT	**Observation and communication with the pupil, evaluation of family, school and community factors contributing to the pupil's adjustment**
HEALTH APPRAISAL	**Comprehensive examination of all body systems and appraisal of the educational relevance of the findings**

Unit 4
Overhead 8

EDUCATIONALLY HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

- MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED
- AUDITORILY HANDICAPPED
- EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED
- VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
- MENTALLY RETARDED
- COMMUNICATION HANDICAPPED
- SOCIALLY MALADJUSTED
- CHRONICALLY ILL
- ORTHOPEDICALLY HANDICAPPED
- NEUROLOGICALLY OR PERCEPTUALLY IMPAIRED



Unit 4
Overhead 10

PARTICIPANTS AT THE IEP MEETING TO DEVELOP THE BASIC PLAN SECTION

- **BASIC CHILD STUDY TEAM**
  - SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST
  - SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER
  - LEARNING DISABILITIES TEACHER/CONSULTANT
- **ONE OR BOTH PARENTS**
- **TEACHER(S) HAVING KNOWLEDGE OF THE PUPIL'S EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE**
- **PUPIL, WHERE APPROPRIATE**
- **OTHERS, AT DISCRETION OF SCHOOL OR PARENTS**

BASIC PLAN

OF IEP

MUST INCLUDE:

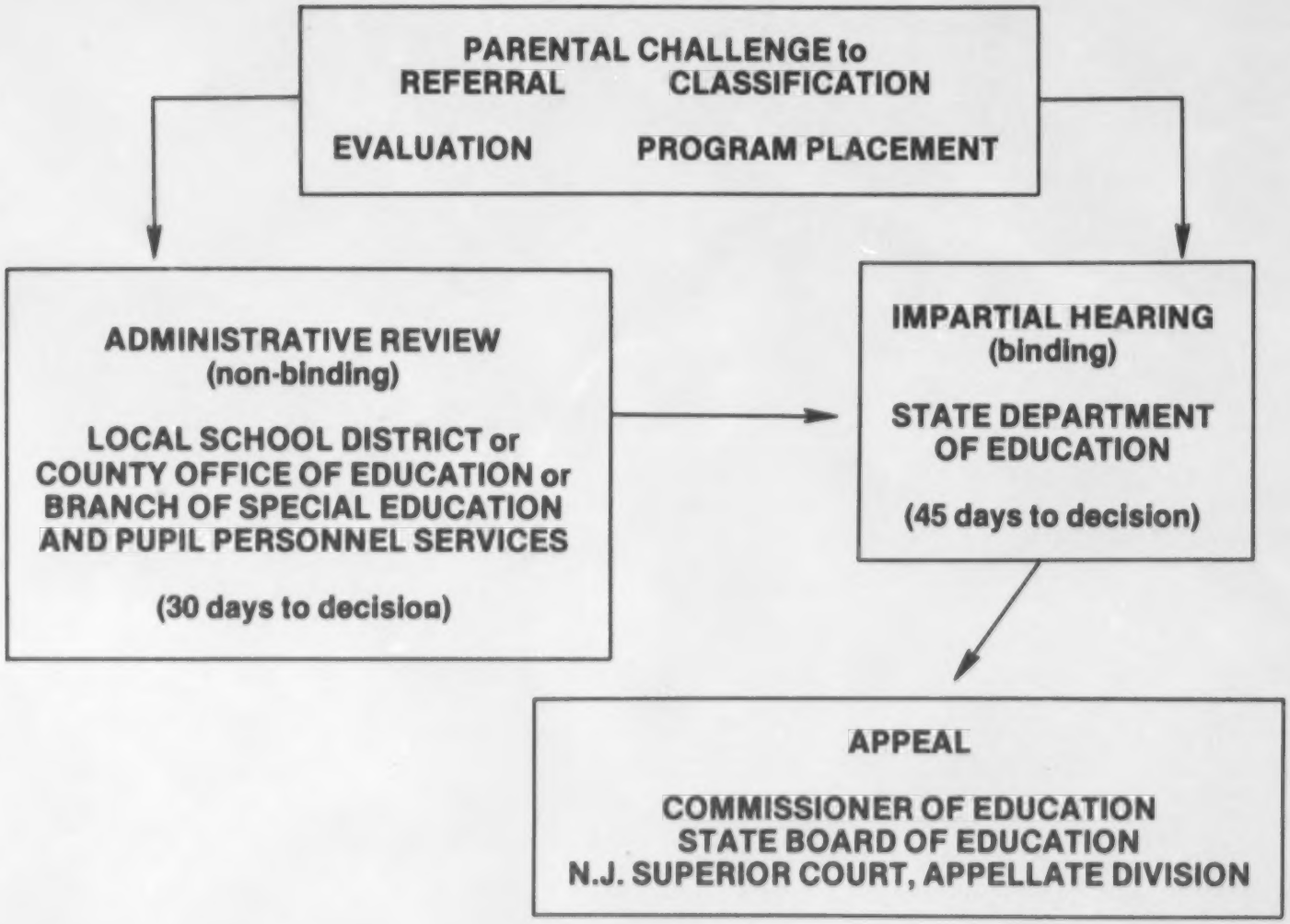
1. STATEMENTS OF FINDINGS
2. STATEMENT OF PUPIL ELIGIBILITY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
3. ANNUAL GOALS
4. OBJECTIVES
5. PROGRAM
6. RELATED SERVICES
7. EVALUATION PROCEDURE AND SCHEDULE
8. IMPLEMENTATION

THE INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

THE INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE SHALL INCLUDE, WHERE APPROPRIATE, BUT NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO:

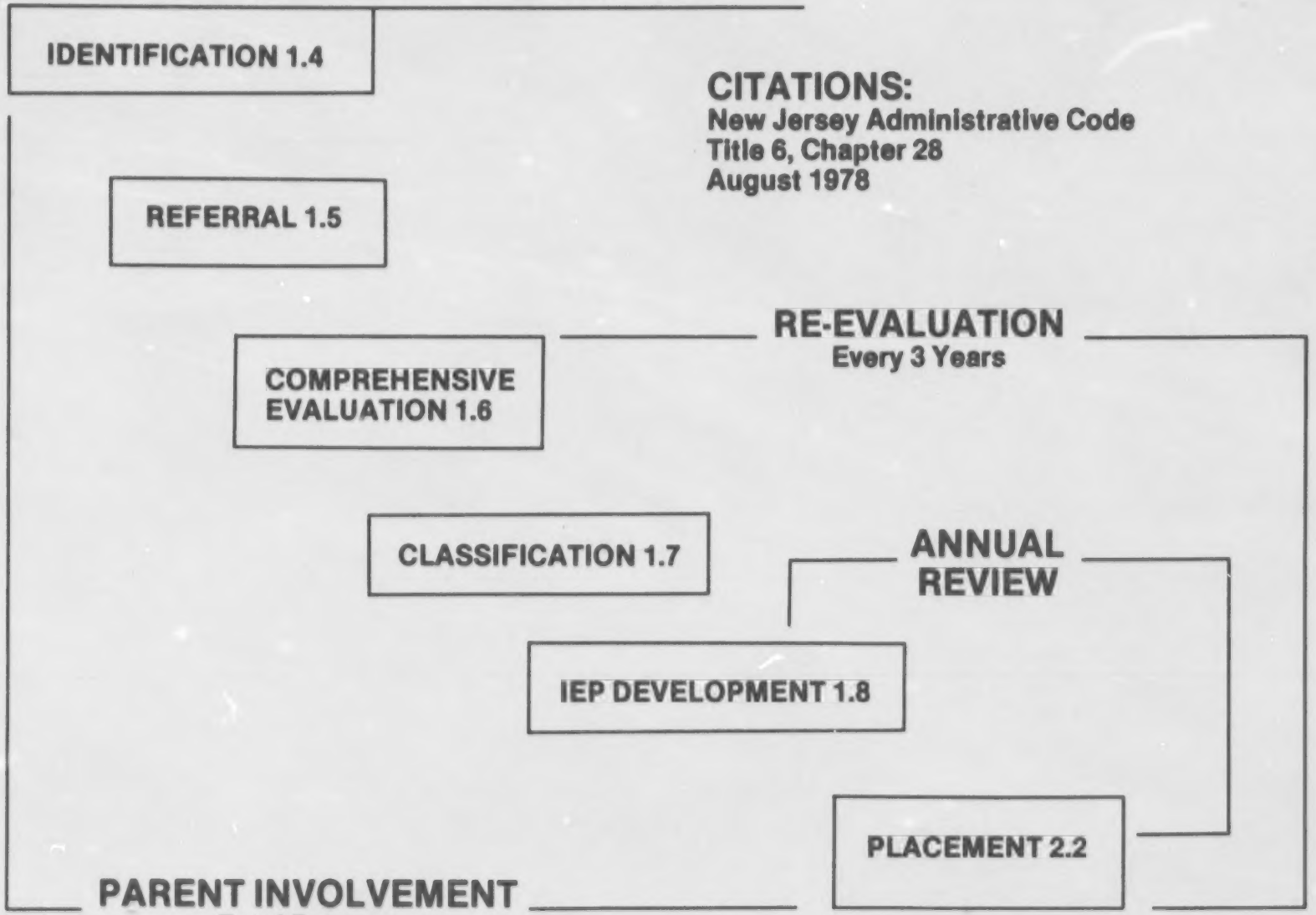
- **SCHEDULE**
- **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**
- **TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT PERSONAL-SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**
- **INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA AND MATERIALS**

DUE PROCESS



Unit 4
Overhead 14

NEW JERSEY SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS



Unit 4
Overhead 15

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THE IEP IN THE LOCAL SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

EVALUATION

1. My knowledge of the local special education process prior to this activity was:

1 (low)	2	3	4	5	6 (high)

2. The extent this activity increased my knowledge about the local special education process was:

1 (low)	2	3	4	5	6 (high)

3. The overall usefulness of this activity for me was:

1 (low)	2	3	4	5	6 (high)

4. The organization of the activity was:

1 (poor)	2	3	4	5	6 (excellent)

5. I thought the leader's presentation was:

1 (poor)	2	3	4	5	6 (excellent)

6. The strengths of this activity were:

7. The weaknesses of this activity were:

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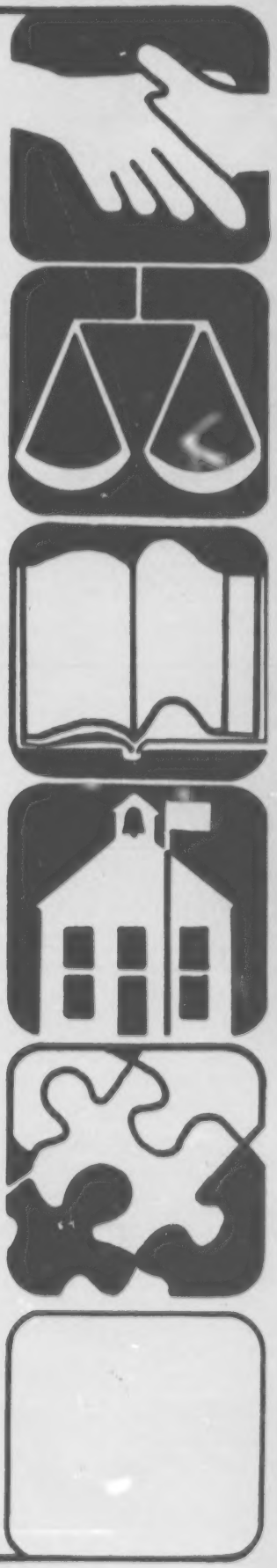

Unit 5

Anatomy of an IEP

Unit Introduction
Activity 1: Anatomy of an IEP
Activity 2: Building Questions
Activity 3: IEP Self-Evaluation
Unit Evaluation

UNIT INTRODUCTION

COMMENTARY:

Unit Five is designed to help parents develop an understanding of the components of an IEP and formulate the questions that they would like to ask at an IEP meeting.

Unit Five begins a focus on the actual IEP meeting that is intensified in Unit Six. Taken together, these two units are the critical part of the training process. Parents should begin to apply the knowledge gained in earlier units and focus on preparing themselves for their IEP meetings.

Parents will have a great many questions and comments regarding the material presented in this unit. Group leaders should encourage as much discussion as possible.

CONTENTS:

Activity 1: **Anatomy of an IEP**

Activity 2: **Building Questions**

Activity 3: **IEP Self Evaluation**

UNIT DIRECTIONS:

"Anatomy of an IEP" is a review of the components of an IEP and should be presented to all groups.

"Building Questions" involves parents in formulating questions they might ask at an IEP meeting. The practical focus of this activity makes it a useful presentation to any group.

"IEP Self Evaluation" provides parents with an opportunity to evaluate what they know about the IEP. This activity involves sending a self evaluation form home with participants. At the beginning of the next session the group leader should devote a few minutes to answering any questions the self evaluation may generate.

It is recommended that all the activities in this unit be utilized. Since this would involve considerable time, Unit Five might form a basis for two separate training sessions if sufficient time is unavailable during a single session.

ANATOMY OF AN IEP

PURPOSE:

To familiarize participants with the components of an IEP.

TIME:

60 Minutes

STRATEGY:

The leader makes a presentation concerning IEP components and leads a discussion.

MATERIAL:

- Proposed Script
- List of IEP Components (Worksheet 4)
- IEP Components Worksheet (Worksheet 5)
- Newsprint/Backboard

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader reviews the proposed script prior to presentation.

The leader begins his/her presentation by conducting a brief review of the IEP process and handing out copies of "List of IEP Components" and "IEP Components Worksheet."

The leader draws attention to the "List of IEP Components."

The leader then presents the material in the proposed script noting the main points on newsprint or a blackboard. Parents are encouraged to take notes on the "IEP Components Worksheet."

This activity will generate considerable discussion of the personal concerns of participants. The group leader should allow considerable latitude for this discussion. This activity should not be ended until the group leader has a sense that all participants have a basic grasp of the IEP components.

ANATOMY OF AN IEP

PROPOSED SCRIPT

Every IEP has the same basic components. If you look at the "List of IEP Components", you will note that these components are divided into two sections.

The Basic Plan Section is what will be developed at the IEP meeting that you will be attending. Essentially, the Basic Plan is an attempt to determine what a child's needs are and develop strategies for meeting those needs.

The Basic Plan breaks down into eight components. The first component is "Statements of Findings." These statements describe what a student can and cannot do. The statements are based on information from a variety of sources — teachers, parents, the child study team and any other individual who has current useful knowledge about the child.

This first component, "Statement of Findings," should include a summary of the comprehensive evaluation performed in the process of classifying the pupil. This would include information concerning academic achievement, intellectual functioning, personal and social adjustment, and physical and health status. It might also include prevocational, vocational and self-help skills when these apply to the child.

The second component is the "Statement of Child Study Team's Decision of Pupil Eligibility." This statement explains the reasons for the pupil's classification. It explains the pupil's eligibility for special education and related services.

The third component is "Annual Goals." These goals state what a pupil is expected to do by the end of one year.

The fourth component is "Objectives." These are the specific steps which lead to the achievement of the annual goals.

The fifth component, "Description of Pupil's Educational Program," consists of three separate parts. The first, "Rationale for Program and Placement," gives the reasons for choosing a particular program and placement for the pupil. The second, "Explanation of Least Restrictive Environment," explains how this program and placement allow the maximum possible contact of the handicapped child with other children who are not handicapped. The third is the "Extent of Participation in Regular Educational Programs."

The sixth component is "Related Services." Related services are those additional services needed to help a child benefit from his or her educational program, such as transportation, speech correction, counselling, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

The seventh component is "Evaluation Procedures and Schedule." This outlines the methods the school will use to see how much progress the pupil has made and how often evaluations will be made.

The eighth component is "Implementation." Implementation is a listing of the people responsible to see that the IEP is put into effect, their responsibilities and the deadlines for completing their assignments.

Those are the eight components of the Basic Plan. The Basic Plan is drawn up at a meeting attended by the child study team, one or both parents, a particular teacher or teachers and the pupil, when appropriate. Sometimes other individuals who have something to offer are invited.

The instructional guide is an individual plan for putting the IEP into effect. This is developed by appropriate child study team member(s) in conjunction with the teachers involved.

The instructional guide has four components. The first is a "Schedule of the Pupil's Program." This details how much time the child will spend with each of the people responsible for providing specific services. The second is "Instructional Strategies." These are the specific methods used to teach the pupil. They are geared to the way the child learns best. The third is "Techniques and Activities Designed to Support the Personal-Social Development of the Pupil." This deals with a child's self image and with ways of improving the child's relationships with adults and peers. And finally, "Special Media and Materials" includes books, equipment and any other material needed for the pupil's program.

LIST OF IEP COMPONENTS

BASIC PLAN SECTION

1. Statements of Findings
2. Statement of child study team's decision of pupil eligibility for special education and related services
3. Annual Goals
4. Objectives
5. Description of pupil's educational program
   a. Rationale for pupil's educational program
   b. Explanation of least restrictive environment
   c. Extent of participation in regular educational programs
6. Related services
   a. Description of services necessary
   b. Date when services will begin
   c. Length of time services will be given
7. Evaluation procedures and schedule
8. Implementation

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

1. A schedule of pupil's program
2. Instructional strategies
3. Techniques and activities designed to support the personal-social development of the pupil
4. Special media and materials

IEP COMPONENTS WORKSHEET

BASIC PLAN SECTION

1. Statements of Findings

2. Statement of team's decision of pupil eligibility for special education and related services

3. Annual Goals

IEP COMPONENTS WORKSHEET

4. Objectives

5. Description of pupil's educational program

   a. Rationale for program and placement

   b. Explanation of least restrictive environment

   c. Extent of participation in regular educational programs

IEP COMPONENTS WORKSHEET

6. Related Services

7. Evaluation procedures and schedule

8. Implementation

IEP COMPONENTS WORKSHEET

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

1. A schedule of pupil's program

2. Instructional strategies

3. Techniques and activities designed to support the personal-social development of the pupil

4. Special media and materials

BUILDING QUESTIONS

PURPOSE:

To assist parents in developing questions that might be asked by a parent at an IEP meeting.

TIME:

60 Minutes

STRATEGY:

The group reviews the IEP components and suggests questions that might be asked by parents concerning each component.

MATERIAL:

- Leader's IEP Components Worksheet (Worksheet 6)
- Copies of IEP Components Worksheet (Worksheet 5, Unit 5, Activity 1)
- Blackboard/Newsprint

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity and handing out copies of the "IEP Components Worksheet."

The leader reviews each IEP component using the "Leader's IEP Components Worksheet." The leader begins by giving the group a working definition of the component. The leader then asks the group to formulate questions relating to each component which would be appropriate to ask at an IEP meeting. The Leader's IEP Worksheet provides some examples of starter questions that the leader may use to stimulate the discussion. Starter questions should *not* be presented as questions for parents to answer.

The leader records the suggested questions on newsprint or a blackboard encouraging the group to take notes on the "IEP Components Worksheet," noting that it might be used as reference material at an actual IEP meeting.

LEADER'S IEP COMPONENTS WORKSHEET

I. BASIC PLAN SECTION

The Basic Plan section is developed at a meeting attended by the basic child study team, one or both parents, teacher(s) and, where appropriate, the pupil and other designated individuals.

1. **STATEMENTS OF FINDINGS:**

Working Definition: A description of what the child currently can and cannot do.

The description is based upon information provided by the child study team's evaluations, teacher(s) and parents' information as well as input from other individuals as appropriate.

The description should include information concerning the child's current academic achievement, intellectual functioning, personal and social adjustment, physical and health status, and where appropriate, prevocational, vocational and self-help skills.

Starter Questions:

- What kinds of evaluations were done?
- Who did these evaluations?
- How did my child behave when being tested?
- How is my child doing academically and socially in his present program?
- What are his/her strengths? (What *can* he/she do?)
- What are my child's problem areas? (What *can't* he/she do?)
- How will this information be used to develop my child's program?

2. **STATEMENT OF CHILD STUDY TEAM'S DECISION OF PUPIL ELIGIBILITY:**

Working Definition: An explanation of the pupil's eligibility for special education and related services.

Starter Questions:

- What does my child's classification mean?
- When will my child's classification be reevaluated?

3. **ANNUAL GOALS:**

Working Definition: What a child is expected to do by the end of one year.

LEADER'S IEP COMPONENTS WORKSHEET

Starter Questions:

- Which of my child's problem areas are being addressed?
- How was it decided which problems were to be addressed?

4. **OBJECTIVES:**

Working Definition: Specific steps which lead to the achievement of annual goals.

Starter Questions:

- Is there an objective for each goal stated?
- How will these objectives help my child reach the stated goals?
- How will you know these objectives are achieved?

5. **DESCRIPTION OF PUPIL'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:**

- Rationale for the program and placement
- Explanation of least restrictive environment
- Extent of participation in regular education program.

Starter Questions:

- What regular school activities will my child participate in?
- How often will my child participate in regular school activities?
- In what academic and/or non-academic areas will my child participate in the regular education program?

6. **RELATED SERVICES:**

Working Definition: Those additional services needed to help a child benefit from his educational program, such as transportation, speech correction, counselling, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

Starter Questions:

- What services are needed to provide an appropriate educational program for a child such as mine?
- When will these services begin?
- How long will they go on?

LEADER'S IEP COMPONENTS WORKSHEET

7. **EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND SCHEDULE:**

Working Definition: The methods that will be used to see how much progress a child has made and how often the evaluations are to be done.

Starter Questions:

- How will my child's progress be evaluated?
- How will I be kept informed of the results of the evaluation?

8. **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Working Definition: A list of people responsible to see that the IEP is put into effect, their responsibilities, and the timelines for completing their assignments.

Starter Questions:

- Who will see that my child's IEP is implemented?
- When will the instructional guide be written?
- Who will be involved in writing the instructional guide?
- When will my child's IEP be implemented?

II. INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

An individual plan developed by the designated child study team member(s) and teachers to implement the child's IEP. This plan includes the student's program schedule, instructional methods, techniques and activities to support personal-social development, and special instructional media and materials to be used to meet the pupil's unique needs.

1. **A SCHEDULE OF PUPIL'S PROGRAM:**

How much time the child is going to spend with people responsible for providing specific services.

2. **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES:**

Specific methods that will be used to teach the child. These are geared to the way the child learns best.

3. **TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO SUPPORT THE PERSONAL-SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUPIL:**

Methods of improving the child's self image and his/her relationships with peers and adults.

4. **SPECIAL MEDIA AND MATERIALS:**

This includes books, equipment and any other materials needed for the child's program.

IEP SELF EVALUATION

PURPOSE:

To provide parents with an opportunity to examine their knowledge about IEP.

TIME:

5 Minutes

STRATEGY:

The group completes and discusses an IEP self evaluation form.

MATERIAL:

- Understanding the IEP — Self Evaluation (Worksheet 7)

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity and handing out copies of the "Understanding the IEP — Self Evaluation"

The leader requests that parents take the self evaluation home and complete it. It should be emphasized that this is not a test, merely a means of a parent assessing his/her own knowledge of the IEP. The leader should ask parents to look the form over and should answer any questions concerning the self evaluation form that participants may have.

The group leader should take time at the beginning of the following session to answer any questions the self evaluation may generate.

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP — SELF EVALUATION

Please answer the following by circling the asterisk beneath the appropriate answer.

	NO	SOMEWHAT	YES
1. I understand the purpose of an IEP.	*	*	*
2. I know when and how often an IEP meeting should take place.	*	*	*
3. I have an understanding of what should happen at the IEP meeting.	*	*	*
4. I know who should participate at the meeting and what their contribution should be.	*	*	*
5. I have an understanding of my role as a member of the IEP planning group.	*	*	*
6. I know what I should do to prepare for the IEP meeting.	*	*	*
7. I know what an IEP should contain.	*	*	*
8. I understand that the IEP should address the child's problem(s).	*	*	*
9. I understand what is meant by annual goals.	*	*	*
10. I understand how objectives relate to annual goals.	*	*	*
11. I know the types of related services which may be provided.	*	*	*
12. I understand the meaning of placement in the least restrictive environment.	*	*	*
13. I know how often, in what ways and by whom a child's IEP is reviewed.	*	*	*
14. I know what my due process rights are in relation to identification, evaluation and placement.	*	*	*
15. I know where and how to proceed if I choose to pursue due process.	*	*	*

ANATOMY OF AN IEP

EVALUATION

1. My knowledge of the components of the IEP prior to this activity was:

1 (low) 2 3 4 5 6 (high)

2. The extent this activity increased my knowledge about the IEP components was:

1 (low) 2 3 4 5 6 (high)

3. The extent this activity increased my knowledge of questions that might be asked at an IEP meeting was:

1 (low) 2 3 4 5 6 (high)

4. The overall usefulness of this activity for me is:

1 (low) 2 3 4 5 6 (high)

5. The organization of the activity was:

1 (poor) 2 3 4 5 6 (excellent)

6. I thought that the presentation of the leader was:

1 (poor) 2 3 4 5 6 (excellent)

7. The strengths of this activity were:

8. The weaknesses of this activity were:

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At The I E P Meeting

Unit Introduction
Activity 1: Ways to Prepare
Activity 2: Suggestions for Participation
Activity 3: Profile Sheet
Activity 4: Stop Signs
Unit Evaluation

UNIT INTRODUCTION

COMMENTARY:

Unit Six consists of activities designed to assist parents in preparing for and participating in the IEP meeting. Since it addresses the practical concerns of parents, this unit is of great importance.

CONTENTS:

Activity 1: **Ways to Prepare**

Activity 2: **Suggestions for Participation**

Activity 3: **Profile Sheet**

Activity 4: **Stop Signs**

UNIT DIRECTIONS:

All of the activities in this unit are of considerable importance and should be presented to each group.

"Ways to Prepare" involves parents in drawing up a list of things to do in preparation for an IEP meeting.

"Suggestions for Participation" involves parents in drawing up a list of suggestions for actual participation at the IEP meeting.

"Profile Sheet" provides parents with a means of developing a written profile of their child containing information that may be shared at the IEP meeting.

"Stop Signs" provides a final briefing for parents prior to the IEP meeting.

The Unit Six activities provide parents with reference materials that may be taken to the IEP meeting. Group leaders should encourage this utilization of materials.

Since this unit involves considerable time, the group leader may choose to present Unit Six as two sessions.

WAYS TO PREPARE

PURPOSE:

To share ideas on ways to prepare for an IEP meeting.

TIME:

60 Minutes

STRATEGY:

The leader elicits and records suggestions made by the group.

MATERIAL:

- Preparing for an IEP Meeting — To Do List (Worksheet 8)
- To Prepare for an IEP Meeting (Worksheet 9)
- Newsprint/Blackboard

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader should take several minutes to discuss the "Understanding the IEP — Self Evaluation" (Worksheet 7, Unit 5, Activity 3)

The group leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity to the group and handing out copies of "Preparing for an IEP Meeting — To Do List."

The leader asks each group member to formulate three suggestions of ways that a parent should prepare for the IEP meeting. The participants are then asked to share suggestions with the group.

Throughout this activity, the group leader should try to elicit ideas from the group rather than presenting them himself/herself. The leader should stress that all suggestions are exactly that — not directions.

The group leader should record the suggestions on newsprint or a blackboard encouraging the participants to take notes on "Preparing for an IEP Meeting — To Do List."

After the suggestions of the participants have been made and discussed, the group leader hands out copies of "To Prepare for an IEP Meeting" and leads a discussion of this material.

The group leader should encourage participants to use both handouts as reference materials at the IEP meeting.

PREPARING FOR AN IEP MEETING

To Do List

TO PREPARE FOR AN IEP MEETING

THESE ARE ONLY SUGGESTIONS. THEY ARE NOT THINGS YOU MUST DO. THEY ARE TO SERVE AS IDEAS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER WHEN PREPARING FOR YOUR IEP MEETING.

1. **TALK TO YOUR CHILD.** Find out how your child feels about school. Find out his likes and dislikes. Ask if there is something he would like to do better.

2. **VISIT YOUR CHILD'S CLASSROOM.** Make an appointment to observe your child in the classroom.

3. **REVIEW YOUR CHILD'S RECORDS.** Make an appointment with school prior to your IEP meeting and review what is contained in your child's records.

4. **BEFORE THE IEP MEETING BE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE NATURE AND BASIS OF YOUR CHILD'S CLASSIFICATION.** Do you have enough information? Have you reviewed the evaluation reports? Do you understand the meaning of the classification?

5. **PREPARE TO SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD.** Jot down some notes about your child to bring to the meetings, such as: interests, hobbies, relationships with family and friends, behavior at home, things child does well, and things child has difficulty with.

6. **PREPARE YOUR OWN QUESTIONS.** Look at components of the Basic Plan section of the IEP and write a list of questions you would like to discuss at the meeting. Bring the list with you.

7. **FIND OUT WHO WILL BE ATTENDING THE MEETING.** Call the school and ask who will be participating at the meeting. Is there anyone not present from school or outside of school whom you would like to invite? Notify the district if you intend to bring someone from outside of school (friend, advocate, outside evaluator, etc.). It should be someone who has knowledge of your child as well as special education services.

8. **BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUR CHILD.** Talk with other parents who have attended IEP meetings before attending your own. Jot down what you think your child needs and the extent of progress you would like to see during the year. You should consider your child's vocational and pre-vocational needs. This applies to children of all ages.

TO PREPARE FOR AN IEP MEETING

9. **BRING ANY RECENT EVALUATIONS OR REPORTS DONE OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL** which you think will be of value.

10. **BRING SAMPLES OF CHILD'S WORK FROM ACTIVITIES DONE IN OR OUT OF SCHOOL** which you feel say something about your child. These could be out of school samples as well as school work.

11. **TALK TO OTHER PARENTS.** Talk to others you know who have attended IEP meetings to learn from their experiences. If you do not know other parents, call one of the local parents' associations to ask for information.

12. **THINK ABOUT WHETHER YOUR CHILD SHOULD BE INVOLVED AT THE IEP MEETING** and discuss this with school personnel.

13. **ASK YOUR CHILD IF HE/SHE WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE MEETING.** Talk it over with him/her.

14. **KEEP A FILE OF YOUR COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE SCHOOL.** Record the dates. You might include letters you send, letters you receive, telephone calls, report cards and samples of your child's work. It's never too late to start!

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

PURPOSE:

To share suggestions for participation at the IEP meetings.

TIME:

60 Minutes

STRATEGY:

The leader elicits and records suggestions made by the group.

MATERIAL:

- At the IEP Meeting — To Do List (Worksheet 10)
- Suggestions for Participation at the IEP Meeting — To Do List (Worksheet 11)
- Newsprint/Blackboard

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity and distributing the blank copies of "At the IEP Meeting — To Do List."

To initiate discussion, the leader may refer to items listed on "Suggestions for Participation at the IEP Meeting — To Do List."

The leader then elicits further suggestions from the group. All suggestions are recorded on newsprint or a blackboard. The leader encourages participants to take notes on "At the IEP Meeting — To Do List."

After the suggestions of participants have been made and discussed, the leader should hand out copies of "Suggestions for Participation at the IEP Meeting" and conduct a discussion of this material.

The group leader should encourage participants to use both handouts as reference materials at the IEP meeting.

The group leader should further suggest that participants prepare an index card outlining the points they wish to make at the IEP meeting to use as a checklist at the meeting.

AT THE IEP MEETING

To Do List

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARTICIPATION AT THE IEP MEETING

To Do List

THE FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PARTICIPATING AT THE IEP MEETING:

1. **IF AT ANY POINT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND SOMETHING,** ask that it be restated. Do not hesitate to ask for clarification of any detail.

2. **IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF AN EDUCATIONAL TERM,** ask for an example or demonstration of what is meant.

3. **SHARE RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD** by contributing what you know about your child's skills, interests, weaknesses and strengths.

4. **REFER TO YOUR LIST OF QUESTIONS** and any notes you have brought to see that all issues you have felt important have been discussed. Ask for further discussion whenever necessary.

5. **TAKE NOTE OF WHAT REGULAR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM FOR YOUR CHILD.** Don't forget non-academic areas such as lunch and recess and other areas such as art, music and physical education.

6. **BE SURE ALL SERVICES THAT ARE NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM** will be written into the IEP.

7. **ASK YOURSELF IF WHAT IS PLANNED CORRESPONDS TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR CHILD'S ABILITY.**

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PROFILE SHEET

PURPOSE:

To assist parents to prepare a description of their child that will be useful at the IEP meeting.

TIME:

60 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Preparation by parents of a description of their child to bring to the IEP meeting.

MATERIAL:

- Profile Sheet (Worksheet 12)

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity and distributing copies of the "Profile Sheet."

The leader informs parents that the "Profile Sheet" will be a useful reference material for the IEP meeting.

The leader allows the participants time to fill out the "Profile Sheet."

The leader asks participants to share information entered on the "Profile Sheet."

The leader should point out that the "Profile Sheet" is a parent "evaluation" of the child.

PROFILE SHEET

1. WHAT MY CHILD IS INTERESTED IN:

2. THINGS MY CHILD IS READY TO LEARN:

3. MY CHILD'S STRENGTHS:

4. MY CHILD'S WEAKNESSES:

5. PROBLEMS WITH THE CURRENT PROGRAM:

6. SERVICES WHICH MY CHILD NEEDS BUT IS NOT RECEIVING:

7. QUESTIONS I WANT TO ASK ABOUT MY CHILD:

8. OTHER NOTES:

STOP SIGNS

PURPOSE:

To provide a final briefing for parents before the IEP meeting.

TIME:

15 Minutes

STRATEGY:

Review and discuss "Stop Signs."

MATERIAL:

- Stop Signs (Worksheet 13)

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

The group leader begins by explaining the purpose of the activity and distributing "Stop Signs."

The leader conducts a discussion of this material. The leader should suggest that parents use "Stop Signs" as a reference material at the IEP meeting.

STOP SIGNS

BEFORE THE MEETING:

BEFORE PLANNING YOUR CHILD'S PROGRAM, . .

. . . DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR CHILD'S PROBLEMS ARE?

IF YOUR CHILD IS PARTICIPATING IN THE IEP MEETING . .

. . . TALK IT OVER WITH HIM/HER BEFORE IT TAKES PLACE.

AT THE MEETING:

IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IS BEING SAID . .

. . . ASK FOR AN EXPLANATION.

. . . ASK YOURSELF, "IS MY CHILD ABLE TO DO WHAT IS BEING PLANNED?"

. . . IN PLANNING YOUR CHILD'S PROGRAM DON'T FORGET PREVOCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

. . . "LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT" MEANS INVOLVING YOUR CHILD WITH NON-HANDICAPPED PUPILS AS APPROPRIATE. IN WHAT AREAS CAN YOUR CHILD BE INVOLVED WITH NON-HANDICAPPED PUPILS? DON'T FORGET AREAS SUCH AS LUNCH, RECESS, ART, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

AT THE IEP MEETING

EVALUATION

1. My knowledge of ways to prepare and participate in the IEP meeting prior to this activity was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

2. The extent this activity increased my knowledge about ways to prepare and participate was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

3. The overall usefulness of this activity for me was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(low)					(high)

4. The organization of the activity was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

5. I thought that the leader's presentation was:

1	2	3	4	5	6
(poor)					(excellent)

6. The strengths of this activity were:

7. The weaknesses of this activity were:

Annotated Resources

ANNOTATED RESOURCES

I REGULATIONS:

State:

- **New Jersey Administrative Code**

The particular regulations that describe the provisions for educational services for handicapped children in the State of New Jersey, are:

Title 6, Chapter 28, Subchapters 1-10 "Special Education" (August 1978) and
Title 6, Chapter 3, Subchapter 2 "Pupil Records" (March 1978)

To obtain a copy of these specific regulations request them from your local school district or write to:

New Jersey State Department of Education
Branch of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services
225 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Federal:

- **Public Law 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975**

PL 94-142 is a comprehensive law ensuring that all handicapped children and youth receive a free appropriate public education.

To obtain a copy of these regulations request the *Federal Register* for August 23, 1977, Part II from:

Superintendent of Documents
Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

- **Public Law 93-112, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504**

Section 504 is a basic civil rights provision prohibiting discrimination against America's handicapped citizens in any program or activity receiving federal assistance.

To obtain a copy of these regulations request the *Federal Register* of May 4, 1977, Part IV from:

Superintendent of Documents
Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

II PAMPHLETS:

- **94-142 and Section 504: Numbers That Add Up To Educational Rights For Handicapped Children**

This 48-page guide deals with children's educational rights under Public Law 94-142 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504. Major topics are: (1) What the Laws Cover, (2) School Districts' Responsibilities, (3) Evaluation Process, (4) Individual Rights, (5) Resources for Educational Programs.

To order, send $1.75 to:

Children's Defense Fund
1520 New Hampshire Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

- **Special Rights For Special Children:**

A manual for parents of handicapped children in New Jersey which provides useful information about pupils' rights to special education services as well as a list of public and private resources.

To obtain a copy send $.50 to:

Education Law Center, Inc.
Suite 800
605 Broad Street
Newark, New Jersey 07102

III PERIODICALS:

- *Closer Look*, Fall 1977. **"You Have New Rights — Use Them!"**

A special issue report from *Closer Look* designed to help parents utilize the legal tools given them through Public Law 94-142.

- *Closer Look*, Summer 1978. **"Vocational Education — An End to Dependency"**

This issue deals with vocational education, current laws and programs regarding handicapped children and youth.

To obtain free copies of either of these reports write to:

National Information Center for the Handicapped
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, D.C. 20013